

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Special City Commission Meeting
September 8, 2005

The City Commission met in a formal session Thursday, September 8, 2005, at 5:05 p.m. in the Alcazar meeting room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gardner, and the following were present:

1. Roll Call:

George Gardner, Mayor/City Commissioner
Susan Burk, Vice Mayor/City Commissioner
Joe Boles, City Commissioner
Donald A. Crichlow, City Commissioner
Errol D. Jones, City Commissioner

William B. Harriss, City Manager
James P. Wilson, City Attorney
Martha V. (Nell) Porter, City Clerk
Timothy A. Burchfield, Chief Administrative Officer
John Regan, Chief Operations Officer
Robert Leetch, Director of Utilities and Public Works
Mark Litzinger, City Comptroller
Jason Sheffield, Administrative Services Group Manager
Meredith Little, Financial Services Group Manager
Loran Lueders, Police Chief
Paul K. Williamson, Director, Public Affairs
Karen Rogers, Recording Secretary

2. Public Hearing – Resolution 2005-18, establishing the tentative millage rate for the FY 2005/2006 Budget.

Jason Sheffield, Administrative Services Group Manager, stated that it was the first of two budget hearings as required by the Florida Department of Revenue. He said that on July 11th the City Commission adopted Resolution 2005-15 approving the proposed millage rate of 6.8 mills for the 2006 fiscal year or 19.14% over the rolled back rate of 5.7075 mills; however, during the budget workshop on August 12th staff presented and the Commission approved a balanced budget based on a millage rate of 6.6 mills or 15.64% above the rolled back rate of 5.7075 mills. He added that if the budget was approved it would be the 11th consecutive year that the City maintained or lowered the millage rate.

Mr. Sheffield stated that the incremental increase in advalorem tax revenue would be used to fund four incremental positions, increased wages, benefits and operating expenditures and increased levels of services as approved by the City Commission.

Mayor Gardner opened the public hearing.

Don Hine, 21 Fullerwood Drive, said that with the increase in tax assessment there should be a roll back to compensate for the increased assessments; however, he would talk with Mr. Litzinger about the matter to further understand the budget.

Mayor Gardner closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Crichlow stated that the City would not have to raise the tax rate because the property value increase was enough to handle the increased cost of running the City.

MOTION

Commissioner Burk MOVED to approve and read in its entirety Resolution 2005-18 establishing the tentative millage rate for the 2005/2006 budget. Commissioner Crichlow SECONDED the motion.

Mr. Wilson read the title as follows:

RESOLUTION 2005-18

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE TENTATIVE LEVY OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005-2006.

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of St. Augustine, Florida, has conducted a public hearing on its final millage rate of 6.6000 mills and has determined its rolled back rate is 5.7075 mills, as required by Florida Statutes 200.065.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Commission of the City of St. Augustine, Florida, that:

1. The Fiscal Year 2005-2006 tentative millage rate of the City of St. Augustine, Florida, is 6.6000 mills, which is greater than the rolled-back rate of 5.7075 mills by 15.64 percent.

ADOPTED at a special meeting of the City Commission of the City of St. Augustine, Florida, at 5: p.m., this 8th day of September 2005.

MOTION APPROVED BY 4/1 WITH COMMISSIONER JONES DISSENTING

3. Public Hearing – Ordinance 2005-29, concerning the proposed Budget for FY 2005/2006.

Mr. Sheffield stated that the ordinance ratified, approved and adopted the tentative budget for the 2005/2006 fiscal year as

presented and discussed during the budget workshop in August.

Mayor Gardner opened the public hearing; however, there was no response.

MOTION

Commissioner Burk MOVED that Ordinance 2005-29 be placed on first reading, read by title only and approved. Commissioner Boles SECONDED the motion.

Mr. Wilson read the title as follows:

ORDINANCE 2005-29

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, RATIFYING, APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET OR BUDGET ESTIMATES OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2005, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2006; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION

AYES: Burk, Boles, Crichlow, Gardner

NAYES: Jones

MOTION CARRIED 4/1

4. Public Hearing - Ordinance 2005-27, amending the Fire Assessment Fee.

Mr. Sheffield stated that the ordinance had been presented and passed on first reading on August 22, 2005.

Mayor Gardner opened the public hearing for Ordinance 2005-27 and Resolution 2005-19, but there was no response.

MOTION

Commissioner Boles MOVED that Ordinance 2005-27 be placed on second reading, read by title only and approved. Commissioner Burk SECONDED the motion.

Mr. Wilson read the title as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 2005-27

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 97-25 CREATING A MUNICIPAL SERVICE TAXING UNIT IN THE INCORPORATED AREA OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF THE MAXIMUM ASSESSMENT TO FOUR CENTS (\$.04) PER SQUARE FOOT OF ENCLOSED BUILDING SPACE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION

AYES: Boles, Burk, Crichlow, Gardner

NAYES: Jones

MOTION CARRIED 4/1

5. Public Hearing – Resolution 2005-19, certifying the non-advalorem assessment roll relative to the Fire Assessment Fee.

MOTION

Commissioner Boles MOVED that Resolution 2005-19 be approved. Commissioner Burk SECONDED the motion

VOTE ON MOTION

AYES: Boles, Burk, Crichlow, Gardner

NAYES: Jones

MOTION CARRIED 4/1

6. Introduction and consideration of Ordinance 2005-30, concerning a utility rate adjustment.

Mr. Sheffield stated that the ordinance modified section 26-51 and 26-55 of the Code increasing the utility connection fees and water and sewer rates as presented during the August budget workshop.

MOTION

Commissioner Crichlow MOVED that Ordinance 2005-30 be placed on first reading, read by title only and approved. Commissioner Burk SECONDED the motion.

Mr. Wilson read the title as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 2005-30

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION 26-34 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE TO ESTABLISH OWNERSHIP AND MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY OF FIRE HYDRANTS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS; AMENDING SECTION 26-51 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE TO SET WATER AND SEWER CONNECTION CHARGES FOR CUSTOMERS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS; AMENDING SECTION 26-55 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE TO SET THE MONTHLY WATER AND SEWER RATES FOR CUSTOMERS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HERewith; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE FOR THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION

AYES: Crichlow, Burk, Boles, Jones, Gardner

NAYES: None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Consideration of Resolution 2005-20 concerning a marina rate adjustment.

Mr. Sheffield reported that the resolution established new dockage rates for the Marina as presented and discussed during the August budget workshop.

Jay Bliss, 12 Oglethorpe Boulevard, stated that the proposed Marina increases would make St. Augustine's rates higher than municipal marinas at Fort Lauderdale, Fort Meyers Beach, St. Petersburg, Vero Beach and Jacksonville; moreover, Jacksonville charged nothing for the first 72 hours, plus most of the aforementioned marinas provided abundant parking. He said that Vero Beach, Fort Meyer and Fort Lauderdale charged no more than \$10 for dinghy dockage, which included mooring. He said that the proposed long term rates were \$3.60 more than the next most expensive public marina. He suggested that imposing those proposed fees on the boating community would not be hospitable.

Mr. Harriss stated that the City was run like a business based on the City's market. He said that if the marina made a profit it could lower taxes; moreover, profits were used for the marina so that the taxpayers would not have to fund it. He said that if the market was affected by the increase they could address the matter again. He concluded that the City marina fees were below what the other marinas in the area charged.

Commissioner Boles stated that it was important for the City, as a tourist destination, to be hospitable, but St. Augustine was a tourist destination where 40% of the City's properties paid no taxes, which was not a tax burden that most cities experienced. He added that the City marina fees were still lower than any of the areas privately run

marinas. He concluded that if they could increase the marina revenue they should.

Commissioner Burk suggested a break in the daily dockage rate for City residents.

Mr. Harriss stated that he had no objection to the suggestion, if the City could do so legally.

A brief discussion determined that the City Attorney would research the suggestion and if possible bring a resolution concerning the matter to the Commission.

Commissioner Crichlow stated that they needed to protect the City's hospitality reputation; however, there was incredible value to docking ones boat at the Marina and being within easy walking distance to all the City attractions. He added that there were large expenses coming up for the marina, and they did not want to use money from the general fund for them; therefore, he supported the resolution.

MOTION

Commissioner Crichlow MOVED that Resolution 2005-20 be approved. Commissioner Burk SECONDED the motion.

VOTE ON MOTION

**AYES: Crichlow, Burk, Boles, Jones
Gardner**

NAYES: None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m. ¹

¹ Transcribed by Karen Rogers, Recording Secretary

MAYOR

CITY CLERK